

099351

WABAS

REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

MA



BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

099351

MAY 13 1976

LIBRARY SYSTEM

Job Opportunities For Women In The Military: Progress And Problems



LM099351

Department of Defense

Although the services have essentially opened all noncombat jobs, women are not being assigned to all of them, primarily because:

- Recruiters have failed to tell women about occupational options.
- Many women prefer administrative or medical jobs.
- Combat requirements for men restrict the jobs open to women.

Some women have been assigned to jobs with requirements that kept them from working effectively.

No standards have been established for measuring women's strength, stamina, and other abilities.

The Department recognizes these problems and has agreed to reexamine the opportunities available to women in the military.

703119
099351

MAY 11 1976



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-157371

To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

With the advent of the All-Volunteer Force and the anticipated passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the Department of Defense intensified efforts to recruit women and to increase their use in a wider range of occupational specialties, including some previously restricted to men. GAO initiated a review to determine how effective the services' efforts have been to recruit, train, and utilize women.

We have made our study pursuant to the Budget and Accounting Act, 1921 (31 U.S.C. 53), and the Accounting and Auditing Act of 1950 (31 U.S.C. 67).

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; the Secretary of Defense; and the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James A. Stacks".

Comptroller General
of the United States

C o n t e n t s

	<u>Page</u>
DIGEST	i
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Scope of review	2
2 LIMITED PROGRESS IN DIVERSIFYING ASSIGNMENT OF WOMEN	3
Army	4
Navy	5
Marine Corps	6
Air Force	6
Factors limiting the diversification of assignments	9
Prohibition against combat service	9
Recruitment and assignment process	10
Conclusions	11
Recommendations	11
3 NEED FOR PHYSICAL AND OPERATIONAL JOB STANDARDS	13
Air Force	14
Performance in selected specialities	14
Actions to improve assignments	18
Army, Navy, and Marine Corps	20
Performance in selected specialities	20
Conclusions	26
Recommendations	26
APPENDIX	
I Letter of February 23, 1976, from the Department of Defense	28
II Principal officials responsible for administer- ing activities discussed in this report	30

The Air Force has recognized this problem and has started to develop standards for use in assigning both men and women to jobs. (See pp. 18 to 20.)

The services have a unique opportunity to evaluate the extent to which women are interested in, and can perform, jobs traditionally restricted to men. To do this, GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense have the services:

- Reevaluate all jobs to identify those that can really be opened to women, considering jobs that (1) must be restricted to men because all authorized positions are required by combat units or the rotation base and (2) primarily involve combat vessels.
- Develop physical and other standards for jobs where either is a factor in effective performance.
- Develop standards for measuring the strength, stamina, and other requirements for jobs where such attributes are factors in effective performance.
- Tell women about the jobs for which they qualify and encourage them to select those previously restricted to men.
- Require women to meet the same training and performance requirements as men in the jobs assigned.

Department of Defense officials agree with these recommendations and agree that the opportunities for women in the military should be newly evaluated. The Department of Defense has formed a study group to address these issues and will keep GAO informed on the group's progress.

D I G E S T

The draft was to end. Fewer men were expected to join the services. Equal Rights Amendment requirements were expected.

This was the milieu in 1972 when the Department of Defense started recruiting more women and using them in as many jobs as possible within combat limitations, including those previously restricted to men. (See pp. 1 and 2.)

By December 1974, the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps had opened essentially all noncombat jobs to women. However, women were assigned to only 44 percent of the opened jobs in the Marine Corps; 63 percent, in the Army; 70 percent, in the Air Force; 72 percent, in the Navy. Most women were assigned to administrative or medical jobs. (See pp. 4 to 8.)

This was primarily because:

- Recruiters failed to tell women about occupational options.
- Many women preferred administrative or medical jobs.
- Combat requirements, including specific overseas assignments restricted to men (restricting most or all jobs to men.) (See pp. 9 and 10.)

Some women were assigned to jobs with requirements that kept them from working effectively. This included aircraft and vehicle maintenance or work on combat vehicles. No standards had been established for measuring women's strength, stamina, and other abilities. (See pp. 14 to 25.)

The military apparently intended to begin a program that would eventually identify those jobs that would be equally open to everyone. Restrictions on combat service clearly impede women in some jobs. Other factors, such as physical strength, might also be involved. As one of the world's largest employers, however, and particularly in an all-volunteer atmosphere, the services saw the need to make the best use it could of everyone available and willing to serve.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

Our objectives were to determine the extent to which the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps have increased the opportunities for women, to determine the extent to which women have accepted these opportunities, and to obtain information about women's performance in specialties which have traditionally been considered primarily or solely available to men. We obtained information on the (1) entry requirements for men and women, (2) procedures for establishing goals and quotas for women, (3) procedures for recruiting and assigning women to specialties, and (4) distribution of women in the specialties. We also interviewed headquarters officials and commanding officers, supervisors, instructors, and women at several training centers and military installations.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Early in calendar year 1972, the Department of Defense started studying the use of military women and preparing contingency plans for using more women to offset possible shortages of men after the draft ended. Shortly afterward, in March 1972, the Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment. As a result, the Department intensified efforts to make the military services models of equal opportunity, and the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps developed enlistment plans for women to meet the following yearend totals.

<u>FY</u>	<u>Army</u>	<u>AIR FORCE</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marine Corps</u>
1972 (actual)	12,349	11,535	5,998	2,066
1973	15,900	14,741	8,137	2,150
1974	20,000	18,776	12,611	2,252
1975	22,000	23,617	16,309	2,601
1976	23,000	29,229	18,524	3,152
1977	23,500	35,298	19,463	3,382

In addition, each service began to increase the occupational specialties open to women.

By the end of December 1974, the Army had about 33,535 enlisted women, the Air Force about 22,200, the Navy about 15,100, and the Marine Corps about 2,570. Thus, of a total military strength of 2.5 million, about 73,000 were women.

Each service has opened most noncombat specialties to women. Combat specialties have not been opened to women because sections 6015 and 8549, title 10, United States Code, prohibit the Navy and Air Force from assigning women to combat aircraft and prohibit the Navy from assigning women to vessels other than hospital and transport ships. Although we were unable to identify any additional legislation against assigning women to combat service, each service, as a practical matter, has prohibited the assignment of women to combat-related occupations.

Openings in some combat-related specialties have been limited by the services in order to maintain rotation programs for special overseas assignments, i.e., hardship duty and sea duty, which are restricted to men.

ARMY

In 1972 the Army adopted plans to increase the number of enlisted women from about 12,350 at the end of fiscal year 1972 to 23,500 at the end of fiscal year 1977 and to greatly expand the range of specialties of women's assignments. At that time, 62 percent of the women were assigned to administrative specialties and 32 percent to medical specialties.

By December 1974, the Army had increased the number of enlisted women to about 33,525 and had opened 411 of 457 specialties to them. However, these women were assigned to only 259, or 63 percent, of the open specialties. The following tabulations of assignments to administrative and medical specialties show that most women were still assigned to these two occupational fields.

	<u>Number of women assigned</u>	<u>Number of men assigned</u>
Administration career management field:		
Clerk-typist	3,066	15,672
Stenographer	230	506
Postal clerk	112	1,785
Medical records specialist	320	1,389
Administrative specialist	533	8,578
Equipment maintenance clerk	255	3,135
Unit clerk	510	4,888
Personnel management specialist	480	3,515
Personnel records specialist	822	4,865
Personnel action specialist	357	1,683
Finance specialist	538	4,733
Accounting specialist	93	856
Legal clerk	170	1,527
Information specialist	179	1,034
Eight other specialties	254	5,999
Total	<u>7,919</u>	<u>60,166</u>
Medical career management field:		
Medical specialist	2,722	16,902
Clinical specialist	891	4,226
Operating room specialist	289	1,413
Dental specialist	686	2,250
Neuropsychiatric specialist	131	511
Physical therapy specialist	65	226
Social work/psychology specialist	250	1,316
X-ray specialist	183	1,081
Pharmacy specialist	70	205
Medical laboratory specialists	392	1,864
Fourteen other specialties	411	4,821
Total	<u>6,090</u>	<u>34,815</u>
Total	<u>14,009</u>	<u>94,981</u>

CHAPTER 2

LIMITED PROGRESS IN DIVERSIFYING

ASSIGNMENTS OF WOMEN

The Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps opened most noncombat occupational specialties to women and began to emphasize diversification of their assignments in fiscal year 1973. Some progress has been made, but most women are still assigned to administrative or medical specialties. Furthermore, some women assigned to nonadministrative specialties are actually performing administrative work.

Officials of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps said that assignments for women are significantly limited by the prohibition against combat service. They said that, as a result, most or all of the authorized positions in many specialties must be reserved for men to meet requirements of combat and combat-related units, including certain overseas assignments. In effect, a number of jobs said to be open to women are really not, except on a limited or token basis. Air Force officials said that combat requirements do not significantly limit women's assignments. The Air Force diversification plan provided for initially emphasizing the assignment of women to mechanical and electrical specialties and for assigning women to most specialties by fiscal year 1978.

Progress in diversifying women's assignments also has been hindered by the tendency of women to select specialties traditionally occupied by women and by the failure of Army and Marine Corps recruiters to tell women about the specialties available to them.

Progress in diversifying the assignments of women is summarized below. This data shows that females are still largely assigned to traditional fields, that is administrative and medical jobs, but that progress has been made in assigning them nontraditional jobs. However, as shown in chapter 3, some females are not actually performing the duties of the nontraditional jobs. Therefore, it is difficult to say how much real progress has been made.

The Department of Defense, as well as the individual services, agree with the conclusions and recommendations in the chapter. Some corrective actions have been taken while others are being considered. A copy of the Department of Defense comments is included as appendix I.

	<u>Number of women assigned</u>	<u>Number of men assigned</u>
Administration:		
Yeoman	1,154	9,983
Disbursing clerk	138	2,253
Personnelman	767	7,089
Postal clerk	33	1,174
Storekeeper	364	8,694
Aviation storekeeper	214	3,900
Ship's serviceman	58	3,972
Legalman	21	313
Aviation maintenance administra- tionman	229	2,931
Communications technician, admin- istration	80	900
Total	<u>3,058</u>	<u>41,209</u>
Medical:		
Hospital corpsman	813	14,455
Hospitalman	765	4,077
Apprentice hospitalman	624	2,446
Recruit hospitalman	13	368
Dental technician	230	2,221
Dentalman	219	872
Apprentice dentalman	125	323
Recruit dentalman	16	39
Total	<u>2,805</u>	<u>24,801</u>
Total	<u>5,863</u>	<u>66,010</u>

Navy officials informed us that all occupational specialties have been analyzed, and those that are primarily seagoing or having billets required for a rotation base have been identified. Occupational specialties have also been identified that have requirements ashore or overseas where women can usually be assigned without detriment to the male sea-to-shore rotation base. An August 1975 Navy instruction identifies those ratings closed to women because (1) any significant input would have an adverse affect on male rotation and (2) the jobs to be done are primarily required aboard vessels or in combatant aircraft. In addition, an enlisted women's coordinator billet has been established to assist in the Navy's efforts toward refining occupational specialties open to women and evaluating those specialties that can absorb a greater or lesser number of women.

According to a recent issue of Army magazine, most female soldiers opt for the skills traditionally practiced by women despite the fact that the Army has opened most other occupational specialties. This has created an over-strength of women in these areas, particularly in the lower enlisted ranks. Because of the large concentration of enlisted women in these traditional skills, Army officials stated many female first termers serving in these fields will have to switch to other specialties if they want to reenlist.

NAVY

In 1972 the Navy adopted plans to increase the number of enlisted women from about 6,000 at the end of fiscal year 1972 to 19,460 at the end of fiscal year 1977 and to greatly expand their use to a wide range of specialties. At that time 42 percent of the women were assigned to administrative specialties and 41 percent to medical specialties.

By December 1974, The Navy had increased the number of enlisted women to 15,114 and had opened all 109 occupational specialties to them. Women were assigned to 79, or 72 percent, of the open specialties. Six thousand two hundred and thirty-two, or 41 percent, were assigned to seaman or airman specialties, which are designations for personnel not assigned to a specific occupational specialty. The seaman or airman is assigned work by, and at the discretion of, the commanding officers at their duty stations. The Navy does not record specific work assignments within these specialties, and it was not practical for us to determine them. Therefore, we were unable to determine what kinds of work these Navy females were doing.

Although the other 8,882 women were assigned to 77 occupational specialties, 5,845, or 66 percent, were assigned to the following 18 administrative or medical specialties.

	<u>Number of women assigned</u>	<u>Number of men assigned</u>
Information	60	1,209
Administration	4,450	29,709
Accounting and finance and auditing	429	5,086
Personnel	969	11,752
Communications operations	1,161	12,572
Supply	1,906	26,458
Supply services	51	1,362
Transportation	653	19,017
Intelligence	830	12,506
Procurement	64	1,333
Printing	43	885
Medical and dental	3,227	23,823
Total	<u>13,843</u>	<u>145,712</u>

However, significant numbers were assigned to mechanical and electronic specialities.

	<u>Number of women assigned</u>	<u>Number of men assigned</u>
Aircraft maintenance	1,617	66,291
Communications-electronic systems	672	33,167
Mechanical-electrical	178	11,103
Avionics systems	730	30,456
Total	<u>3,197</u>	<u>141,017</u>

The diversification achieved by the Air Force appears consistent with plans adopted in 1972. At that time, the Air Force planned to have women assigned to most specialties by fiscal year 1978 but to initially emphasize assignments to mechanical and electronic specialties. Officials said that, to do this, quotas were established and women were recruited specifically for mechanical and electrical specialties. The officials said that, in effect, women were forced to accept these specialties if they wanted to enlist at that time. For example, plans for fiscal year 1973 provided for assigning 5,617 women to 110 specialties. Of this number, 824 were to be assigned to 49 newly opened specialties, including 694 to missile electronic maintenance, communications-electronics systems, avionics systems, aircraft accessory maintenance, aircraft maintenance, and metalworking specialties. Plans for fiscal year 1974 provided for assigning 3,662 (50 percent) of 7,280 women to 86 newly opened specialties, including 3,241 to newly opened mechanical and electronic specialties.

MARINE CORPS

In 1972 the Corps planned to increase the number of enlisted women from about 2,070 at the end of fiscal year 1972 to 2,500 at the end of fiscal year 1975. It also started a program to increase the number of occupational specialties open to women. At that time, 81 percent of the women were assigned to administrative specialties. (The Navy provides medical services to the Marine Corps.)

In December 1974 the Marine Corps had increased the number of enlisted women to 2,574 and had opened 252 of 589 specialties to them. However, women were assigned to only 111, or 44 percent, of the open specialties. In addition, as indicated by the following list of occupational areas, about 72 percent were assigned to administrative specialties.

	<u>Number of</u> <u>women assigned</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>men assigned</u>
Communications	147	13,181
Basic and personnel administration	840	8,451
Supply administration and procurement	410	11,621
Transportation administration	55	901
Auditing, finance, and accounting	170	1,651
Marine Corps exchange	71	591
Public affairs	34	333
Legal services	46	467
Aviation operations	23	2,309
Printing	17	231
Data processing	120	1,751
Training support	37	244
Logistics	31	1,185
Total	<u>2,001</u>	<u>42,916</u>

AIR FORCE

In 1972 the Air Force adopted plans to increase the number of enlisted women from about 11,550 at the end of fiscal year 1972 to 35,300 at the end of fiscal year 1977 and to greatly expand their use to a wide range of specialties. At that time, 75 percent of the women were assigned to administrative specialties and 16 percent to medical specialties.

By December 1974, the Air Force had increased the number of enlisted women to 22,198 and had opened about 411 of 420 specialties to them. Women had been assigned to 286, or 70 percent, of the open specialties but, as indicated by the following table, most were still assigned to administrative and medical specialties.

Prior to November 1973 women in the Marine Corps could not be assigned to the Fleet Marine Force because it is subject to deployment at any time. At that time, the Commandant approved a pilot program to assign women to these commands. In February of 1975 the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved the routine assignment of women to Fleet Marine Force commands in the United States within the limitations of the maximum number by grade and skill recommended by the commanders. Women Marines would be assigned not only to the headquarters of the Fleet Marine Force, but also to subordinate units which would not require them to deploy with the assault echelon of the command if a contingency should arise.

Recruitment and assignment process

Progress in diversifying the assignments of women also has been slowed by the failure of Army and Marine Corps recruiters to tell women about the occupational fields and specialties available and by the tendency of many women entering each service to select assignment to administrative or medical specialties.

Army

We interviewed 118 women who entered basic training between July 1 and 22, 1974. Sixty-four, or 54 percent, said that they were neither aware of nor told about the opportunities available to women or the assignments for which they were eligible on the basis of preenlistment test scores. All of these women were eligible for training in several specialties, and most said that they would have considered the alternatives.

Of the 118 women, 100 had received assignments to specific specialties. Fifty had been assigned to administrative or medical specialties, and 50 had been assigned to various other specialties. However, of 103 women expressing preferences, 57 said that they preferred being assigned to administrative or medical specialties.

Navy

We interview 44 women who entered basic training between July 18 and August 2, 1974. All were told about the specialties available to them. Twenty-two had been assigned to occupational specialties--12 to administrative or medical specialties and 10 to various other specialties. However, of 35 women expressing preferences, 21 said that they preferred administrative or medical specialties.

FACTORS LIMITING DIVERSIFICATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Prohibition against combat service

Sections 6015 and 8549, title 10, United States Code, prohibit the Navy and Air Force from assigning women to combat aircraft and prohibit the Navy from assigning women to vessels other than hospital and transport ships. Although we were unable to identify any additional legislation against assigning women to combat service, each service, as a practical matter, has prohibited the assignment of women to combat-related occupations. Openings in some combat-related specialties have been limited by the services in order to maintain rotation programs for special overseas assignments, i.e., hardship duty and sea duty, which are restricted to men.

Air Force officials said that the prohibition against combat service does not significantly limit women's assignments because combat service is primarily limited to aircraft crews. However, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officials said that, because of the prohibition, the number of positions available to women in total and in open occupational specialties is limited to those not required for combat activities. All the authorized positions in some specialties, which technically have been opened to women, are required for combat purposes and for rotation, but these are continually reviewed for the feasibility of assigning women to them. We did not evaluate these prohibitions for reasonableness.

Navy officials said that personnel strength and needs are analyzed annually to determine the number of positions that can be made available to women. In December 1974 the Navy's goal for women was a maximum strength of 20,000, and officials said that this was the maximum acceptable without seriously disrupting the sea-to-shore rotation base for men. The goal provided for assigning women to 95 of about 109 specialties. Seaman and airman specialties accounted for about 4,760 of the total assignments, and the remaining 15,240 included 7,800 for administrative or medical specialties. No positions were available to women in such specialties as aviation, antisubmarine warfare operator, ballistic missile fire control technician, gunner's mate-missile technician, instrumentman, and molder.

that can be really opened to women, considering specialties that (1) must be restricted to men because all authorized positions are required by combat or combat-related units and (2) involve primarily combat vessels.

--Tell women about the specialties for which they qualify and encourage them to select those previously restricted to men.

Marine Corps

We interviewed 33 women who entered basic training on August 19, 1974. Eleven said that they were not told about the occupational specialties open to women. Seven of the 11 said that the information could have influenced their enlistment decisions. Also, of 20 women assigned to administrative specialties, 8 said that they preferred administrative specialties.

Air Force

We interviewed 47 women who entered basic training in October 1974. Twenty women had been assigned to administrative or medical specialties, and 27 had been assigned to various other specialties. However, 27 of the 47 said that they preferred administrative or medical specialties. Only 2 of the 20 assigned to administrative or medical specialties said that they would have preferred other specialties.

CONCLUSIONS

Partly because the draft was to end and fewer men were expected to join the services and partly because of potential Equal Rights Amendment requirements, the Department of Defense intensified efforts to make the military services models of equal opportunity. The plans included increasing the recruitment of women and offering them maximum opportunities for serving in as many occupational specialties as possible within combat limitations.

Essentially all noncombat specialties have been opened to women. However, even though women were assigned to specialties previously restricted to men, most women were assigned to administrative or medical specialties. This was primarily because (1) recruiters failed to tell women about their occupational options, (2) many women preferred administrative or medical specialties, and (3) most or all authorized positions in several specialties open to women were restricted to men by the requirements of combat activities. As a result, several specialties theoretically open to women, in practice, really were not open.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of Defense have the services:

--Reevaluate all specialties to identify those

We were told that because of the small number of women assigned to specialties with physical and operational restrictions, these factors apparently have not significantly affected the performance of the services. However, interviews with commanding officers, supervisors, and women indicated that assigning women to specialties in which their performance is restricted does result in inequitable workloads for men and could prevent mission accomplishment by affected units. As a result, we believe the services should develop physical and operational standards for potentially troublesome specialties, as well as procedures for measuring the ability of both men and women to satisfy the standards.

The Air Force has recognized problems associated with assigning women to occupational specialties with strenuous physical and operational demands and has started to develop standards for making assignments of both men and women.

Although we did not review the assignment of men, we recognize that some men do not have the strength and stamina to perform all the tasks of some specialties. We believe physical requirements are more likely to limit the performance of women and are, therefore, of greater concern when women are involved. The services should be concerned about strength to the extent that it is a factor in assigning all personnel.

The Department of Defense and military service officials concur in our conclusions and recommendations. They have agreed to take corrective actions. The Department of Defense comments are included as appendix I.

The results of our review are summarized below by service.

AIR FORCE

Performance in selected specialties

The commanding general of an Air Force Wing made the following comments concerning the use of women in some occupational specialties.

--In some areas women adapt as well as or better than men. The best carpenter on the base is a woman. Also women perform better than men in the engine shop and avionics because their hands are better suited to the work.

CHAPTER 3

NEED FOR PHYSICAL AND

OPERATIONAL JOB STANDARDS

The services had no experience with women in the occupational specialties opened to them during 1972-74. Assignments were based on factors that were essentially the same as for men, such as overall health, aptitude, and personal choice, without regard to their ability to satisfy the specialties' strength, stamina, and operational requirements, that is, the sea-to-shore rotation problem.

- Some women have been assigned to occupational specialties in which they cannot perform effectively because of strength limitations or because the job was combat related.
- Some have not been assigned to specialties in which they have been trained because of restrictions against combat service and because they either could not, or supervisors believed that they could not, do the work.
- Some have not been required to meet the same training and performance requirements as men.

The conclusions in this chapter are based primarily on interviews with females performing certain jobs requiring physical tasks and with their male supervisors. We determined that some women were not performing certain duties required by the job. In most cases both the males and females interviewed indicated that strength was a significant factor where females were not fulfilling the job requirements.

Sometimes, however, the answers we received might also reflect traditional attitudes toward male-oriented roles, such as bulldozer operators, as opposed to jobs traditionally female oriented, such as clerks. Therefore, it is difficult or impossible to determine from the interviews the real reasons why females were not performing certain physical tasks. We have shown the results of our interviews because both the males and females agreed that the females were not, in fact, performing some tasks and, to whatever extent it is an attitude problem, it requires attention before it can be resolved.

control surfaces, wheels, brakes, tires, cowlings, enclosures, hoses, and tubing.

Supervisors of women assigned to this specialty at two Air Force bases said that most women are physically unable to perform effectively. Only 2 of the 10 women under one supervisor are performing effectively. Of the other eight, one has applied for training in another specialty, one is too short to open airplane doors, and six cannot work either on the flight line or on aircraft. A memorandum one supervisor prepared showed that three women had been temporarily reassigned because of pregnancy and that three others had applied for reassignment because of work-related anxiety and depression.

Another supervisor of five women said that:

- Some women cannot handle engine cowlings, cannot torque some bolts, and cannot move certain items of ground equipment.
- They have problems removing screws and performing other tasks that require twisting.
- Women have not created a significant problem, but increasing their number above 15 percent of the work force could hinder mission accomplishment.

We interviewed 13 women assigned to this specialty at two Air Force bases. Seven said that they either cannot perform or have problems performing strenuous tasks (two of these women were assigned office work because of their inability to perform strenuous work). Four said that they can perform required work. One of the other two women was assigned to light duty because of pregnancy, and one was assigned to light duty because of a non-work-connected back injury.

According to instructors and women at two schools, men and women receive the same training and women generally have few problems with the training. The instructors said, however, that training does not duplicate conditions in the field and that women may not be able to perform all the tasks under operating conditions. According to the instructors, under field conditions, women may have problems handling such items as wheels, which may weigh over 150 pounds; toolboxes, which may weigh over 50 pounds; power units; drop-tanks; refueling hoses; 20- and 30-ton jacks; gear boxes; tail cones; and high-torque bolts. We believe that men may also have problems doing some of these tasks.

- Some women do receive unfair treatment because many men assume that they cannot perform a job. However, there is also resentment by many men who are ordered to treat women as equals, yet find themselves working longer hours because a woman has not done a job correctly.
- We have created a management problem by placing women in jobs where they cannot perform their share of the work, particularly aircraft maintenance and repair. We must find a way to correct the problem.
- Some women are being assigned to jobs they cannot physically handle.
- Women adapt well to the administrative side of law enforcement, but some situations are difficult for man, not to mention a 110-pound woman. Women are not assigned to late patrols for safety reasons. As a result, work schedules must be developed around their availability. A military policeman should be able to handle all phases of law enforcement.

To obtain information about the performance of women in some occupational specialties which appeared to involve potentially strenuous physical and operational demands, we interviewed commanding officers, supervisors, and women associated with or assigned to the following occupational specialties at six Air Force installations.

- Airframe repair specialist
- Aircraft maintenance specialist
- Jet engine mechanic
- Materiel facilities specialist
- Vehicle operator/dispatcher
- Aerospace ground equipment repairman
- Helicopter mechanic
- Corrosion control

Each specialty involved tasks which women were having problems performing or were not permitted to perform. Examples of the information obtained are summarized below.

Aircraft maintenance specialist

The responsibilities of this specialty include performing inspections, functional checks, preventive maintenance, and repairs on aircraft-installed equipment. This involves removing and installing components, such as

Actions to improve assignments

The Air Force recognized in 1974 that women were being assigned to occupational specialties which they could not perform effectively and started to (1) identify specialties with strenuous demands and to evaluate the performance of women in them, (2) develop performance standards for troublesome specialties, and (3) develop methods for evaluating the ability of personnel to perform effectively in troublesome specialties.

For example, representatives of the Air Training Command surveyed the performances of women trained as aircraft maintenance specialists, electronic communications and crypto equipment systems repairmen, and law enforcement specialists. One hundred and fifteen women and their supervisors were interviewed at 28 Air Force bases. Survey results showed that:

--Helicopter mechanic and aircraft maintenance specialist: Sixty-two of 97 women interviewed did not have the strength to perform many physically demanding tasks, such as changing tires and brakes, removing batteries and crew seats, closing drag-chute doors, breaking torque on some bolts, and lifting heavy stands. Several women also said that recruiters had not told them about job-performance requirements and that they would immediately accept training in another specialty.

The most frequent complaint by supervisors was that women were not physically qualified to perform many tasks associated with aircraft maintenance. However, some supervisors were satisfied with the performance of women and did not question their physical qualifications.

--Electronic communications and crypto equipment systems repairman: The three women interviewed said that, because of strength limitations, they had problems performing tasks, such as bending conduit, lifting toolboxes, and carrying equipment up ladders to ramps and aircraft.

Another survey showed that 41 percent of the women being trained in aircraft maintenance had problems performing some physically demanding tasks. Men surveyed were experiencing no problems.

Materiel facilities specialist

The responsibilities of this specialty include receiving, preparing for storage, segregating, inventorying, issuing, delivering, preparing for shipment, identifying, inspecting, and classifying items of property and supply.

We interviewed seven women in this specialty at two Air Force bases. Two were performing administrative work. The other five were working in warehouses, and all said that men perform any strenuous work. One said that anything over 20 pounds is too heavy for her, and another said that the inability of women to do the required work places an extra burden on men.

According to a supervisor of three of the women, they perform the same work as men; but he is reluctant to assign them to such work as outside storage because the items handled are too heavy. The chief of supply said that women cannot handle some crates.

Airframe repair specialist

The duties of this specialty include aircraft structural repairs and corrosion control and involve fabricating, molding, shaping, welding, forging, and machining metal parts and forming plastic articles.

We interviewed three women in this specialty at one Air Force base. All three said that they had problems performing some of the work. One said that some tasks require all her strength but that she can accomplish them. Another said that she cannot do any of the work without help and that assigning women to this specialty wastes manpower.

According to the supervisor of these women, they cannot perform more than 50 percent of the work associated with airframe repair. He said they cannot use some drills, cannot open the doors on some aircraft, and have problems with their toolboxes.

Instructors and women at the school for this specialty said that women and men receive the same training. Most of the women said that they have problems performing some tasks but can accomplish them. An instructor said that training does not fully represent field conditions and women should not be assigned to this specialty because of the heavy lifting. Two women working as a team, he said, cannot perform some of the work.

Air Force officials then assessed the physical requirements of specialties in terms of this criteria. Their results follow:

	Stage			
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Sheet metal specialist		X		
Missile facilities specialist		X		
Electrician		X		
Electric powerline specialist	X			
Electrical power production specialist		X		
Refrigeration and air-conditioning specialist		X		
Liquid fuel systems maintenance specialist		X		
Heating systems specialist		X		
Pavements maintenance specialist	X			
Construction equipment operator	X			
Carpenter	X			
Mason	X			
Protective coater			X	
Plumber			X	
Programs and work control specialist			X	
Environmental support specialist	X			
Entomologist				X

According to officials, the Armed Forces Examining and Entrances Stations began measuring and applying these standards to all new Air Force recruits in January 1976.

ARMY, NAVY, AND MARINE CORPS

Performance in selected specialties

Although the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps had assigned small numbers of women to occupational specialties with strenuous requirements, women in these services were having the same problems as women in the Air Force. For example:

- The chief of staff at an Army installation said that the Army had gone too far too fast in experimenting with assigning women and that this subject should be carefully evaluated to insure that women are placed in jobs where they are and can feel productive.

In September 1974 the Air Force's Director of Personnel Plans asked the Office of the Surgeon General to help develop (1) physical standards for occupational specialties with strenuous demands and (2) methods for measuring the capabilities of women to perform in the specialties. The Director said that the most immediate problem involved aircraft maintenance but identified 74 specialties which involved strenuous demands. These included missile, aircraft, vehicle, and munitions maintenance; security and law enforcement; fire protection; aircrew medical services; and supply.

In response, representatives of the Office of the Surgeon General said that an average woman has only 60 percent of the strength of an average man and that it is doubtful that all occupational specialties should be filled with an equal distribution of women. They recommended regulations which provided for measuring the physical capacity of both men and women in four stages, based on factors such as age, strength, stamina, muscular coordination, height, weight, and energy. These are the stages as revised in May 1975:

- Stage 1. Can perform maximum heavy duty over prolonged periods (as demonstrated by a lift of 70 pounds to a height of 6 feet).
- Stage 2. Can perform sustained moderate duty over prolonged periods (as demonstrated by a lift of 40 pounds to elbow height).
- Stage 3. Can perform standard light duty over normal work periods (as demonstrated by a lift of 20 pounds to elbow height).
- Stage 4.
 - a. Initial profile:
 - (1) Enlistment. Below minimum standards for induction.
 - (2) Appointment. Below minimum standards for commission.
 - b. Revision of profile, all Air Force personnel: Medically unacceptable for worldwide service, including remote and isolated duty.

Ammunition storage specialist

This specialty includes manually and mechanically lifting, moving, and stacking rounds and boxes of ammunition and offers an enlistment bonus of \$1,500 to 4-year enlistees. The rounds weigh 58 pounds and the boxes weigh 120 pounds.

According to officials at the training school for this specialty, women and men receive the same training and women have no problems performing physical tasks. Heavy items are generally lifted by two people or with forklifts, and in field activities forklifts are usually used for lifting ammunition. Seven women students, said that they were not required to lift heavy items without assistance, and five said that they worked primarily with empty boxes.

We interviewed supervisors and women in ammunition storage activities at two Army installations. One activity had two women ammunition storage specialists and the other had four. One of these specialists was hospitalized and the other five were performing clerical or administrative duties. Three had received enlistment bonuses.

Officials of both activities said that women had been tried as ammunition storage specialists but physically could not do the work. At one activity all ammunition has to be moved by hand, and at the other installation 90 percent has to be moved by hand. According to the official at one activity, his unit has a combat support mission and, since women cannot be assigned to combat, deployment would require replacing any women assigned to storage operations. The Department of the Army later explained to us that the only restriction is that women will not be assigned to Category I units (generally units which engage the enemy) nor to 35 combat or close combat support military occupational specialities.

Medical specialist (ambulance driver)

This specialty involves driving and maintaining truck-type ambulances and loading and unloading patients under field or deployed conditions.

--The commanding officer of a Marine Corps training school said that the physical requirements of some jobs present a problem for women. For example, they are being trained to climb telephone poles, but most cannot carry 50 pounds of equipment up with them. Most women simply cannot "carry their own weight" when physical effort is required.

--The commanding general of a Marine Corps base was pleased with the quality of women enlisting in the Corps but said some were much too small to handle the jobs assigned. The Corps should be more selective in assigning women to heavy jobs.

To obtain information about the performance of women in specialties which involved potentially strenuous physical and operational demands, we interviewed commanding officers, supervisors, and women associated with or assigned to the following specialties. Each specialty involved tasks which women were having problems performing or were not permitted to perform.

Army:

Ammunition storage specialist
Parachute rigger
Medical specialist
Military policeman
CH-47 helicopter mechanic
Wheel vehicle mechanic

Navy:

Aviation machinist's mate
Aviation structural mechanic
Operations specialist
Boatswain's mate
Quartermaster
Aviation ordnanceman
Engineman

Marine Corps:

Heavy vehicle operator
Organizational automotive maintenance
Electrical equipment repairman

Examples of our findings follow.

Boatswain's mate

This specialty includes taking command of tugboats, barges, and other small craft; handling and storing cargo, mooring lines, and anchor gear; cleaning, painting, and maintaining craft and equipment; and preparing rigging. The work is performed on shore and at sea.

Supervisors of women assigned to this specialty or performing similar functions at two installations said that women physically cannot do much of the work, which includes lifting and handling sandbags that weigh 100 pounds, paint cans that weigh from 72 to 94 pounds, and boat lines that weigh as much as 7 pounds a foot. They said that, as a result, men must perform a disproportionate share of the work.

We interviewed five women. All said that they cannot perform the heavy work associated with this specialty.

Operations specialist

This specialty involves radar operations and such tasks as detecting, tracking, and identifying ships, aircraft, and missiles; providing data for navigation; and plotting tracks for air and surface targets. Operations specialists may be assigned to ship or shore duty and usually work in a combat information center or the bridge of a ship.

We interviewed five women in this specialty at three installations. Two were performing as operations specialists and three were not. One was working in a security office, one was working in a personnel office, and one was cleaning compartments. Two said that before training, they did not know that operations specialist was primarily a sea-duty job.

An official at one installation said that operations specialist is primarily a sea-duty job (women cannot be assigned to such jobs) and that there are very few shore positions. Assigning women to available shore positions, she said, interferes with rotating men between ships and shore duty.

Organization automotive maintenance

The duties of this specialty include inspecting, maintaining, and repairing automotive vehicles up to and including 2-1/2-ton trucks. Persons in this specialty are supposed to be capable of removing and replacing engine components, wheels, hubs, tires, and universal joints.

Officials of a medical company said that women ambulance drivers, particularly small ones, have problems loading and unloading patients, braking and steering ambulances, and changing wheels and tires. They also said that, unlike the men, they do not perform guard duty at night because they were not required to take weapons training. The Department of the Army informed us that as of July 1975, all enlisted women, except conscientious objectors, are required to take defensive weapon training.

We also interviewed five women ambulance drivers. One was performing clerical work and one had not participated in field exercises. The other three said that they have problems loading and unloading patients; one said that during field exercises, three women are assigned to lift patients normally lifted by two men. One also said that she cannot perform vehicle maintenance, including mechanics and changing tires and oil. She said that men drivers perform all the vehicle maintenance.

Wheel vehicle mechanic

The duties of this specialty include inspecting, maintaining, and repairing automotive vehicles up to and including 5-ton trucks. Persons assigned to this specialty are supposed to be capable of removing and replacing engine components, wheels, hubs, tires, and universal joints.

At the time of our review, 45 women were enrolled at the training school for this job. According to officials at the school, some women and some men have problems with tasks such as removing and lifting the wheels (100 to 125 pounds) and hubs of 2-1/2-ton trucks and applying the required torque (125 pounds) to axle nuts. But the officials said that persons unable to accomplish such tasks are provided assistance and not failed because they lack the strength. The officials also said that students work in pairs. One supervisor said that women do have more problems than men with the physically demanding tasks.

School officials also said that training does not really represent field conditions because students work in pairs on equipment repeatedly taken apart and limited to a maximum of 2-1/2-ton trucks. In the field, they said, equipment will be heavier (up to 5-ton trucks) and more difficult to work on.

CONCLUSIONS

Although most women were assigned to administrative or medical specialties, a large number were assigned to specialties with physical and operational requirements--such as aircraft and vehicle maintenance and specialties performed primarily on combat vessels--which apparently limited or precluded their effective performance. This was attributable primarily to the lack of standards for measuring the ability of people to satisfy strength, stamina, and operational performance requirements. In addition, training did not always represent field conditions. The Air Force had recognized these problems and had developed standards for assigning both men and women. According to Marine Corps officials, a study was completed in January 1976 which reviewed existing techniques and developed the management tools necessary to make a thorough task analysis of all military occupational specialties.

The Army and Navy, which have not as yet developed standards should build upon the Air Force and Marine Corps efforts. Coordination of developing standards should be handled through the Department of Defense or one of the services appointed as executive agent.

We believe the services have made some progress in diversifying females' assignments into various occupations but, except for the Air Force, have done a poor job of tracking the results. The Air Force has gone about the diversification program differently and has identified problems not previously considered. If, as the Air Force Surgeon General has concluded, females are only 60 percent as strong as males, it seems there are some jobs that males, on the average, can do better than females.

This, coupled with the combat-rotation-base problem, may mean that some jobs that the military has opened to females are really open only on a token basis. It is important that the services keep track of how well the program is working so that they can better identify those jobs that are truly open to females.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of Defense require the services to:

- Develop physical and operational standards for specialties where either is a factor in effective performance. The Department of Defense should be

One of the two installations visited had three women trained in this specialty but none were functioning in it. Two of the women were assigned to the auto shop in the special services unit where they performed clerical duties, issued tools, and gave instructions to men and women working on their private automobiles. The other woman was assigned to the maintenance shop as a mechanic but said that she was only observing the work. Two of the women said that during training they had problems handling items such as wheels and brakedrums. One said that she could do the work, but the other said that men did it for her.

The supervisor of the women assigned to the auto shop said that they can handle small jobs but are not strong enough to handle heavy mechanic work.

According to an official at the school for mechanics, women do have problems with tires and brakedrums but can handle them with proper tools and procedures. He said that women are not really on their own in training because other class members are always ready to help.

Electrical equipment repairman

The duties of this specialty include inspecting, testing, maintaining, and repairing the electrical parts of equipment, such as generators, refrigerators, and air-conditioners.

Officials at the training school for this specialty said that women have problems lifting and moving toolboxes, heavy generators, batteries, and alternators. The maintenance officer at the school said that the woman assigned to his unit has problems lifting such items as water supply systems and batteries but that men do not mind lifting them for her.

We interviewed three women in this specialty. One was an instructor at the training school, and the other two were working in maintenance shops. One woman working in a maintenance shop said that she likes her job but refuses to lift heavy items. The supervisor of the other woman said that she is limited only by her lack of strength.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

Feb. 23, 1976

MANPOWER AND
MATERIALS

BEST DOCUMENT AVAILABLE

Mr. H. L. Krieger, Director
Federal Personnel & Compensation Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger,

On behalf of the Secretary of Defense, we are providing comments on the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, dated November 21, 1975, on "Expand Job Opportunities for Women in the Military: Progress and Problems" (OSD Case #4234).

The report presents the December 1974 status of the Services programs to increase both the number of women in the military services and the number of occupational specialties available to them. The report states that the Services had opened essentially all noncombat specialties to women. However, findings indicate that the majority of women are assigned to administrative or medical specialties. This is attributed to recruiters failing to tell women about occupational options, women preferring administrative or medical duties, or the Services restricting most or all positions in several open specialties to men because of the need to maintain an overseas to CONUS rotation base.

Additionally, the report points out situations where women are assigned to specialties previously restricted only to men but do not perform effectively because strength and stamina requirements of the job exceeded their capabilities.

GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense:

-- Reevaluate all occupational specialties to identify those that can be really opened to women, taking into consideration (1) specialties that must be restricted to men because all authorized positions are required by combat units or the rotation base and (2) specialties that must be performed primarily on combat vessels.



responsible for coordinating this effort among the services and nullifying any duplicative efforts of the services.

- Develop standards for measuring the ability of personnel to satisfy strength, stamina, and operational performance requirements for specialties where such attributes are factors in effective performance.
- Require women to meet the same training and performance requirements as men on the jobs assigned.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE
FOR ADMINISTERING ACTIVITIES DISCUSSED
IN THIS REPORT

	<u>Tenure in office</u>	
	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<u>DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE</u>		
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE:		
James R. Schlesinger	July 1973	Present
William P. Clements (acting)	May 1973	July 1973
Elliott L. Richardson	Jan. 1973	May 1973
Melvin R. Laird	Jan. 1969	Jan. 1973
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE:		
William P. Clements	Jan. 1973	Present
Kenneth Rush	Feb. 1972	Jan. 1973
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS):		
William K. Brehm	Sept. 1973	Present
Carl W. Clewlow (acting)	June 1973	Sept. 1973
Roger T. Kelly	Mar. 1969	May 1973
<u>DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY</u>		
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:		
Martin Hoffman	Aug. 1975	Present
Howard H. Callaway	June 1973	July 1975
Robert F. Froehlke	July 1971	June 1973
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS):		
Donald G. Brotzman	Mar. 1975	Present
M. Donald Lowe	Mar. 1974	Jan. 1975
Paul D. Phillips (acting)	Jan. 1974	Mar. 1974
Carl S. Wallace	Mar. 1973	Jan. 1974
CHIEF OF STAFF:		
Gen. Frederick C. Weyand	Oct. 1974	Present
Gen. Creighton W. Abrams	Oct. 1972	Oct. 1974

-- Develop physical and operational standards for specialties where either is a factor in effective performance.

-- Develop standards (methods) for measuring the ability of personnel to satisfy strength, stamina, and operational performance requirements for specialties where such attributes are factors in effective performance.

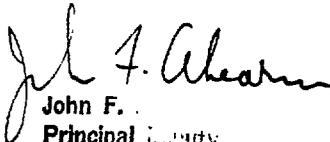
-- Tell women about the various specialties for which they qualify and encourage them to select specialties previously restricted to men.

We concur in the recommendations contained in the report and agree that a new evaluation should be made of the opportunities for women in the military. We have formed a study group to address these issues and will keep you informed of their progress.

The data requested in the report for the number of males in the specialties along with suggested editorial and data corrections are contained in the attachments.

GAO's continuing interest in expanding the opportunities of all personnel in the Department of Defense is appreciated.

Sincerely,


John F. Alheim
Principal Deputy

Encls.

		Tenure in office	
		From	To

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY:

J. William Middendorf II	June 1974	Present
J. William Middendorf II (acting)	Apr. 1974	June 1974
John W. Warner	May 1972	Apr. 1974
John H. Cafee	Jan. 1969	May 1972

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
(MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS):

Joseph T. McCullen, Jr.	Sept. 1973	Present
James E. Johnson	June 1971	Sept. 1973

CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS:

Adm. James L. Holloway III	June 1974	Present
Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.	July 1961	June 1974

COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS:

Gen. Robert E. Cushman, Jr.	Jan. 1972	Present
-----------------------------	-----------	---------

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE:

John L. McLucas	July 1973	Present
John L. McLucas (acting)	May 1973	July 1973
Robert C. Seaman, Sr.	Feb. 1969	May 1973

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR
FORCE (MANPOWER AND RESERVE
AFFAIRS):

David P. Taylor	June 1974	Present
James P. Goode (acting)	June 1973	June 1974
Richard J. Borde	Oct. 1970	June 1973

CHIEF OF STAFF:

Gen. David C. Jones	July 1974	Present
Gen. George S. Brown	Aug. 1973	June 1974
Gen. John D. Ryan	Aug. 1969	July 1973

Copies of GAO reports are available to the general public at a cost of \$1.00 a copy. There is no charge for reports furnished to Members of Congress and congressional committee staff members. Officials of Federal, State, and local governments may receive up to 10 copies free of charge. Members of the press; college libraries, faculty members, and students; and non-profit organizations may receive up to 2 copies free of charge. Requests for larger quantities should be accompanied by payment.

Requesters entitled to reports without charge should address their requests to:

U.S. General Accounting Office
Distribution Section, Room 4522
441 G Street, NW.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Requesters who are required to pay for reports should send their requests with checks or money orders to:

U.S. General Accounting Office
Distribution Section
P.O. Box 1020
Washington, D.C. 20013

Checks or money orders should be made payable to the U.S. General Accounting Office. Stamps or Superintendent of Documents coupons will not be accepted. Please do not send cash.

To expedite filling your order, use the report number in the lower left corner and the date in the lower right corner of the front cover.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

**UNITED STATES
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300**

**POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U. S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE**



THIRD CLASS

2